



# San Diego City Attorney Michael J. Aguirre

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **FISH POACHERS CONVICTED AND SENTENCED**

*Case Prosecuted by the Criminal Division of the San Diego City Attorney's Office*

**San Diego, CA:** Two men caught fishing illegally in the La Jolla Ecological Reserve were sentenced today after pleading guilty to California Fish and Game Code violations. Omid Adhami, 34, who previously admitted to using a spear gun to kill a protected giant sea bass in the preserve, pleaded guilty to unlawfully taking the fish. Nima Hodaji, 26, who was spear fishing with Adhami at the time, pleaded guilty to unlawfully taking a sheephead from the preserve. Sheephead are not a protected species.

According to Deputy City Attorney Michael Rivo, Adhami was barred from fishing in the waters off San Diego for three years and was ordered to serve 90 days in custody. However, this order was stayed pending successful completion of a probationary period during which Adhami is to perform 30 days public work service, pay \$1,100 in fines, and surrender his California fishing license. He was further ordered to forfeit all his dive gear, including a sophisticated diving computer, which had been seized by the Department of Fish and Game.

For taking the sheephead, Hodaji was ordered to pay \$1,100 in fines, surrender all California fishing licenses, and forfeit all his dive gear seized by the Department of Fish and Game. He was also barred from fishing in the waters off San Diego for three years.

The giant sea bass was killed on April 24, 2005. City of San Diego lifeguards stationed at La Jolla Cove observed Adhami and Hodaji enter the water of the preserve carrying spear guns. A short time later the pair was observed dragging a large fish onto their boat. The lifeguards called the California Department of Fish and Game, who responded to the scene and investigated the incident.

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